

SITUATION REPORT NO. 1
INCIDENT NO. 2005-138
DATE: November 29, 2005 Time: 5:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck ND 58505

1. **NATURE OF DISASTER:** **Severe Winter Storm** – A winter storm with snow, freezing rain and high winds moved through portions of North Dakota on November 27, 2005 and continuing, disrupting electrical power.
2. **DEATHS AND INJURIES:** Numerous motor vehicle accidents have been reported throughout the region to include rural and urban roadways resulting in various degrees of injury. No fatalities have been reported.
3. **DAMAGES:** On November 29, the National Weather Service (NWS) in Grand Forks cancelled a blizzard warning that was issued on November 28, for Barnes, Cass, Ransom, Sargent and Richland Counties. Conditions are improving over eastern and southeastern North Dakota. Light snow is expected to diminish to flurries. Winds are also decreasing as the storm moves over the Great Lakes. However, some blowing and drifting of snow will continue into the early afternoon causing difficult traveling in open country.

Rural Electric Cooperatives (REC)

Although the RECs continue to restore power and assess damages, the extent of all damages is still unknown. RECs officials have provided the following updates:

Cass County Electric officials reported approximately 100 poles down and 800 customers without power as of the morning of November 29. Approximately 300 customers are expected to be back in service this afternoon, with most back on by this evening. Officials estimate about 100 individual farms may still be without power this evening, but anticipate all customers will have power by November 30.

On November 29, Dakota Valley Electric officials reported approximately 500 poles down resulting in 1,500 customers without power. It is unknown at this time when power will be restored.

On November 29, Northern Plains Electric officials reported no power poles or lines down. However, scarce power outages occurred in the Jamestown and Tuttle areas due to wires slapping together in the wind. Very few families were impacted by those outages.

On November 29, Ottertail Power officials reported about 75 poles down resulting in power outages to approximately 7,500 customers within their service area, which consists of North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota. On November 29, officials reported 4,000 customers within their service area remain without power. Fairmount and Galchutt are without power and it is unknown when power will be restored. Power is expected to be restored to Great Bend, Mantador, Mapleton and Mooreton on November 29. Power was temporarily restored to Hankinson and Lidgerwood on November 29 and it is unknown when power will be restored. Officials are uncertain when power will be restored to Tyler.

Barnes County

On November 28, many power lines were down due to ice and high winds causing power outages in most areas of the county. Winds gusted up to 50 mph on November 28, with sustained winds of up to 35 mph. Visibility was zero in some places. As of November 29, all power has been restored and all county roads have been reopened.

Cass County

The Emergency Manager reported numerous power poles and lines down. The Red River Regional Dispatch Center staffed a phone bank overnight for public shelter information.

Cass County Deputies report that Harwood, Gardner and Argusville appeared to have most of their power restored early on the morning of November 29. Power was also restored to the cities of Amenia, Arthur and Davenport. The City of Casselton has experienced sporadic outages in the city. The City of Mapleton is without power however, they have generator power to maintain the city's water and waste water systems. Deputies report most of the power outages are at farmsteads throughout the county, most of which have generators or alternate heat sources.

Dickey County

The Emergency Manager reported minor damage to property throughout the county due to the high winds and blowing snow. Although temporary power outages occurred within the county, all power has been restored. One family was sheltered at the Trinity Bible College and two elderly residents were transported to the Prince of Peace Care Center for the night due to a continuous need for oxygen. County roads and city streets are being cleared.

Grand Forks County

The Emergency Manager reported approximately 1,500 residents in Grand Forks were without power the evening of November 28. At approximately 9:20 p.m. on November 28, power was restored to the city of Grand Forks. No additional power outages have been reported.

Ransom County

The Emergency Manager reported intermittent power outages throughout the county and approximately 40 residents east of Lisbon are without power.

Richland County

The emergency manager reported downed lines and icy roads are making travel hazardous in the county. Power was restored to the city of Lidgerwood the morning of November 29.

Sargent County

Residents throughout the county are suffering power outages due to electrical line and pole damage. The loss of electricity caused closing of businesses and governmental agencies throughout the county as well as impacting several residences.

Stutsman County

The Emergency Manager reported minor power disruptions in the Jamestown and Tuttle areas. Approximately four to six inches of snow fell.

4. **RESOURCES:**

LOCAL: Agencies monitoring conditions include local dispatch centers, local officials, law enforcement, maintenance crews, public works, emergency management officials and rural electric cooperatives.

STATE: Agencies monitoring conditions include the Governor's Office, N.D. National Guard (NDNG), State Radio Communications, N.D. Highway Patrol, N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT), N.D. Department of Human Services (NDDHS) and the N.D. Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES).

FEDERAL: The NWS has been issuing periodic weather reports, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has been monitoring reports.

5. **VOLUNTEER ACTION:** The Dickey County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Ellendale Ambulance were alerted to be ready to open a storm shelter at the Trinity Bible College. An official shelter was not opened as the county was able to handle the needs without staffing a shelter.

Neighbors are helping neighbors.

6. **MAJOR ACTIONS:** On November 29, Governor John Hoeven issued a snow emergency declaration for North Dakota due to freezing rains combined with snow and heavy winds. The storm conditions have impeded snow removal and caused widespread power outages.

On November 29, Governor Hoeven activated the NDNG to assist the needs of local jurisdictions.

The Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (MISO) has declared an emergency condition in the Red River Valley of eastern North Dakota and western Minnesota due to transmission line failures caused by the severe winter storm. MISO Reliability Authority is implementing action under North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) Energy Emergency Alert procedures.

On November 29, NDDOT officials reopened U.S. Interstate 29 and U.S. Interstate 94 after no travel was advised in the southeastern portion of the state on November 28. Winds created slippery roads in this area. Eight NDDOT snow plows were moved to the Fargo District from Devils Lake, Grand Forks and Jamestown to assist in snow removal on November 29.

Barnes County

On November 28, the Emergency Manager reported schools and county offices were closed.

Cass County

On November 29, the Emergency Manager reported a shelter in Mapleton was opened on November 28.

On November 28, the Emergency Manager reported County Highway Department pulled their work crews off the roadways and would only respond to emergency needs. As of 12:00 p.m. all county offices and schools were closed.

On November 28, Hector International Airport, in Fargo, cancelled all in-bound flights and Greyhound Bus cancelled all north and south bound routes. City offices for the city of Fargo closed at 2:30 p.m.

On November 28, officials for the city of Argusville reported the lift station was out due to a power outage and asked residents to conserve water.

The Emergency Manager reported four Sheriff's Deputies assessed power outages throughout the county. Every community, except Mapleton, has power. Several farmsteads without power are heating their homes with fireplaces, a fire insert, or generators.

The city of Mapleton has two generators running, one for water and sewer and the other at the fire station which they are using as a shelter. The Emergency Manager has been assured neighbors are helping neighbors and everyone has been checked on.

Dickey County

On November 28, the Emergency Manager reported all county road equipment was pulled off the roads due to 20 mph sustained winds with gusts much higher creating whiteout conditions. Roads were icy and county sanding trucks were unable to stay on the roads due to the ice build-up. Schools were closed throughout the county.

Grand Forks

On November 28, Xcel Energy issued Public Service Announcements for people to conserve electricity due to high demand and minor transmission problems caused by icing and high winds.

Ransom County

Public Service Announcements (PSA's) have been issued asking residents needing assistance to contact the Emergency Manager or State Radio. County Commissioners and Water Resource Board members have been checking on residents without power.

Richland County

PSA's have been on-going on the radio for the past day advising people that if they need anything to contact the emergency manager or law enforcement authorities.

Sargent County

On November 29, the Emergency Manager reported the city of Geneseo is experiencing intermittent power outages. The Emergency Manager is working with Dakota Valley and Ottertail Power to access power outages throughout the county. The Emergency Manager has initiated a calling tree to determine the needs of residents throughout the county.

PSA's have been on-going for the past 24 hours. Residents have been advised shelters are open in Lisbon and Oakes.

7. **ASSISTANCE NEEDED:** The NDNG is providing generators to assist local officials in areas with power outages. In Hankinson, the NDNG is providing a generator to replenish its water tower. Six generators were requested for the city of Fairmount, which the NDNG is providing.
8. **OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE:** No additional outside help has been requested.
9. **OTHER INFORMATION:** The N.D. Division of Homeland Security's Situation Reports are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/des>.

Susan Reinertson, Director
N.D. Division of Homeland Security